

Education Cabinet

Kentucky launches statewide high-speed education network

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Date:

Contact Cathy Lindsey, Office - (502) 564-6606 ext. 146, Cell - (502) 352-

Information: 0110, Cathy.Lindsey@ky.gov

Editor's note: A link to view a Web cast of the event can be accessed at <http://ken.ky.gov>.

FRANKFORT, KY – Kentucky students now are on the leading edge of technology and education thanks to the newly created Kentucky Education Network (KEN). Public schools across the state now are connected to KEN, which continues Kentucky's tradition as a leader in maintaining a high-speed link between education and the World Wide Web.

Education Cabinet Secretary Laura E. Owens, along with other state education leaders, today unveiled the capabilities of KEN and the opportunities it will provide to create a seamless P-20 education community that supports lifelong learning.

"Technology is the foundation upon which today's global economy is built," said Governor Fletcher. "This new program helps prepare the students of Kentucky for the demands of a high-tech world by making technology a part of learning."

KEN addresses the need to improve the speed in which information through the Kentucky Instructional Data System, content via Web sites like Internet 2, applications and communications comes into and leaves local school districts. The goal is to provide equal access among the state's 174 school districts to high-speed Internet that is reliable, secure and cost effective.

The Kentucky Virtual School system, the Individual Learning Plan, online tutoring services, the GoHigher Portal, online advising

services, a KCTCS course applicability system, KET's Encyclomedia and a lifelong learning portal are just a few of the technological features to which KEN will provide all Kentucky students unprecedented speedy access.

"Technology in schools means that learning is no longer bound within the walls of a classroom or the pages of a textbook," said Kentucky Education Cabinet Secretary Laura E. Owens. "This new network will open more educational opportunities to our students and prepare them for the technology challenges of tomorrow."

KEN was created through a joint budget request during the 2006 session of the Kentucky General Assembly. State legislators awarded \$70 million to build the Kentucky Education Network (KEN) and to provide an Instructional Device Upgrade (IDU) for Kentucky public schools' technology programs. These initiatives are providing innovative ways to support the diverse instructional needs of students and prepare them for the 21st century.

The implementation of KEN makes Kentucky the first state to connect all K-12 public school districts and state public postsecondary institutions on one seamless education-centric high-speed network.

The network is the result of a collaborative effort among Kentucky's local school districts, the Kentucky Education Cabinet, the Kentucky Department of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, the Education Professional Standards Board and state workforce organizations.

KEN won the Best of Kentucky Award for "Best IT Collaboration Among Organizations" at the 2007 Kentucky Digital Summit. The summit, co-sponsored each year by the COT and Government Technology magazine, recognizes outstanding individuals and programs that have made information technology contributions to the public sector,

In Education Week's 2007 "Technology Counts" publication, Kentucky tied for fifth in the nation in the overall technology grades

and was one of two states identified as the best at integrating technology into curriculum and classrooms.

Learn more about the Kentucky Education Network at <http://ken.ky.gov>.